



# SWACO

## NEWS & UPDATES

For more information  
contact:

Albert Iosue

SWACO Director of Planning and  
Programs

614-871-5100

[Albert.Iosue@SWACO.org](mailto:Albert.Iosue@SWACO.org)

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## Galloway Man Sentenced to More Than Two Years in Prison for Illegal Dumping and Burning

A Galloway man was sentenced to more than two years in prison for open dumping, open burning, and arson. The charges stem from an illegal dumping and burning incident on Roberts Road in Brown Township in August 2011. After an investigation by the Norwich Township Fire Department and the Environmental Crimes Task Force of Central Ohio (ECTF), Dustin LaBarge was arrested and prosecuted.

During the sentencing hearing, an attorney with Franklin County Prosecutor Ron O'Brien's Office indicated LaBarge dumped tires and mattresses on a rural property owned by another person, without the property owner's knowledge. LaBarge, who is a metal scrapper, then burned the material in order to free the steel belts from the tires and the steel coils from the mattresses so that the steel could be sold to a scrap metal yard. The scrap metal yard utilized by LaBarge assisted in the investigation and prosecution.

LaBarge was scheduled for trial but pled guilty soon after jury selection began. He pled guilty to all five counts in the indictment: two counts of open dumping, two counts of open burning, and arson, all felonies. Common Pleas Judge Stephen L. McIntosh sentenced him to 30 months in prison

and ordered him to pay \$1,367 in restitution to the Norwich Township Fire Department.

LaBarge, who has an extensive criminal record, was on parole at the time of the crime and may face additional prison time from the Adult Parole Authority.

SWACO Executive Director Ronald J. Mills said the conviction was the result of collaboration between the Norwich Township Fire Department and the Environmental Crimes Task Force and should serve as a deterrent for other polluters.

"This is the second time this year the task force's hard work has resulted in prison time for illegal dumping in Franklin County. We will continue to be aggressive in tracking these polluters and seeking the strongest punishment possible," Mills said.

SWACO manages and funds the Environmental Crimes Task Force of Central Ohio. This team consists of members from the Franklin County Sheriff's Office, Franklin County Prosecutor's Office, Franklin County Public Health, Columbus Division of Refuse, and SWACO. The focus of this team is to reduce littering and illegal dumping through education and enforcement.

Anyone can report illegal dumping at [www.itsacrime.org](http://www.itsacrime.org) or by calling 614-871-5322.